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SENSITIVE  
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BK](#) [SR](#) [GR](#)

SUBJECT: GREECE WELCOMES KARADZIC ARREST

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED -- PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (SBU) GOG officials, including FM Bakoyannis, and the main opposition party have welcomed Serbia's arrest of former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and have emphasized that this action further opens Serbia's path to Europe. The only discordant note was sounded by Greece's Communist Party, which criticized the arrest and called instead for the arrest of the NATO SYG and Allied political leaders. Although media commentary covers a wide gamut of reactions, the arrest has, surprisingly, led some to question the nature and level of Greek support for Serb authorities during the break-up of Yugoslavia. End Summary.

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GOG Welcomes Karadzic Arrest  
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¶2. (U) GOG officials have welcomed the Karadzic arrest, highlighting that it further opens up Serbia's European perspective. Shortly after the arrest became public, FM Bakoyannis told reporters that it shows "Serbia is steadily closing the chapter of the problematic past and entering, with a new momentum, on its European course . . . " which Greece supports "with all its strength." In a later statement posted on the MFA website, Bakoyannis said Serbia is "freed from the burdens of a past that has been condemned outright," and can now look "with optimism upon the future and its European perspective, of which Greece will continue to be a firm and ardent supporter."

¶3. (U) Meanwhile, Deputy FM Valinakis, attending the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC), issued a statement that the arrest "vindicates a firm European policy," and "is tangible proof" of Serbia's "intentions regarding full cooperation with ICTY." Valinakis also reiterated Greece's "ardent support" of Serbia's EU perspective, highlighting Greece's desire to see the Serbian Stability and Association Agreement (SAA) ratified by parliaments ASAP and for the EU Interim Agreement to be "implemented directly."

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The Main Opposition Also Cheers  
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¶4. (U) A spokesman for Greece's main opposition PASOK party also termed the arrest an "important step in Serbia's course towards the European Union." The PASOK spokesman also emphasized that PASOK President and Socialist International President George Papandreou "contributed to the formation of this new government of Serbia and for this country to turn a

page."

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Greek Communist Party Discordant Note  
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15. (U) The Greek Communist Party (KKE), one of the few parties in the world maintaining a Stalinist orientation, sounded a discordant note, terming the arrest a sign that Serbia has "given in" to U.S. and EU pressure. The KKE statement termed the Hague Tribunal "illegal and disreputable," as it is the same court that "is responsible for the incarceration and death" of Milosevic "for daring to resist NATO's war against his country." The KKE also called for the arrests of the NATO Secretary General and Allied political leaders for their "mass crimes against the peoples of Yugoslavia, for the succession of Kosovo, and the flare-up of nationalism and threats to peace that we endure in the region today."

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Comment - A Look At Greece's Posture?  
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16. (SBU) Informed commentary in Greece, not surprisingly, covers a wide gamut, from praise of the arrest and what it means for Serbia's future; to discussion of the prospects for "justice" with concomitant expressions of concern with the absence of U.S., Chinese, and Russian participation in the ICC; to suggestions that not only Karadzic, but U.S. and European officials may also be guilty of war crimes during the period in question and that this particular justice is "selective." A few commentators have also stated that the

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arrest and the upcoming trial offer an important opportunity for Greece to reevaluate its posture vis-a-vis Serbia during the wars that broke-up of Yugoslavia, suggesting that the close relations Milosevic, Karadzic and other Serb officials had with Greek officials and the support they received from elements of Greek society should be subject to a critical review. Viewed positively, this last point is a refreshing departure from the norm -- in which a myth of "orthodox solidarity" tends to result in little critical self-examination of Greece's posture during this period. From a more cynical perspective, some have hinted that this focus -- which would include review of Greek/Serb relations during the era of former PM Mitsotakis -- could be directed at his daughter, current Foreign Minister Bakoyannis. End Comment.  
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